

and there is no doubt that the fourth, or *Atharva-*

Veda, although it borrows freely from the *Rich*, has little in common with the others, in its general character, or in its style: the language clearly indicates a different and later era. It may, therefore, be allowably regarded rather as a supplement to three, than as one of the four, *Vedas*.

Of the other three *Vedas*^ each has its peculiar characteristics, although they have much in common; and they are, apparently, of different dates, although not separated, perhaps, by any very protracted interval. The *Rig- Veda* consists of metrical prayers, or hymns, termed *Suktas*^—addressed to different divinities,—each of which is ascribed to a *Rishi*, a holy or inspired author. These hymns are put together with little attempt at methodical arrangement, although such as are dedicated to the same deity sometimes follow in a consecutive series. There is not much connexion in the stanzas of which they are composed; and the same hymn is, sometimes, addressed to different divinities. There are, in the *Veda* itself, no directions for the use and application of the *Su&tas*, no notices of the occasions on -| Mch they are to be

employed, or
of the ceremonies at which they are to be
recited.
These are pointed out, by subsequent
writers, in
Sutras^ or precepts relating to the
ritual; and, even
for the reputed* authors of the hymns, and
for the deities
in whose honour they are composed, we
are, for the
most part, indebted to independent
authorities, espe-
cially to an *Anukramanikd*, or index,
accompanying
each *Veda*. The *Yajur-Veda* differs from
the *Rich* in